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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/593,211

10/15/2007

Ange Luppi

P/3255-103

7447

7590

02/23/2011

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EXAMINER

MAYO-PINNOCK, TARA LEIGH

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3671

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/23/2011

PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/593,211	Applicant(s) LUPPI ET AL.	
	Examiner TARA MAYO-PINNOCK	Art Unit 3671	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 January 2011.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 8-14 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7, 15 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 22 June 2010 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Drafts, Person's Patent Drawing, Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

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DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 27 January 2011 has been entered.

Priority

2. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claims 1 through 7, 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maloberti et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,906,137 A).

Maloberti et al. '137, as best illustrated in Figures 1 through 4, disclose a method for starting up a flow line (3c and 3d, collectively) suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, said flow

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line being extended over the seabed from a wellhead (2) and terminating at a joint end, said joint end being suitable for connection to a subsea riser, and said method comprising:

with regard to claim 1,

a first stage of inducing elongation of said flow line (col. 4, line 52 through col. 5, line 1);

and

a second stage of fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed to maintain said flow line in its elongated position;

with regard to claim 2,

further comprising permitting characterized displacement of said joint end in the direction of elongation of said flow line and prohibiting displacement of said joint end in an opposite direction (col. 4, lines 4 through 11);

with regard to claim 3,

further comprising guiding (i.e., positioning in a desired direction) said joint end in translation during elongation of said flow line;

with regard to claim 4,

further comprising a preliminary stage before said first stage comprising laying said flow line on said seabed and connecting said subsea riser to said flow line;

with regard to claim 5,

wherein said subsea riser is connected to the said joint end during said preliminary stage;

and

with regard to claim 16,

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further comprising extending said riser in a catenary.

Maloberti et al. '137 disclose a system for starting up a flow line (3) suitable for conveying hydrocarbons, wherein:

with regard to claim 6,

said flow line (3c) extends over a seabed from a wellhead (2) and terminates at a joint end of said flow line (col. 4, lines 27 through 32), said joint end being suitable for connection to a subsea riser and said flow line being able to stretch;

a locking system (5) for fixing said joint end with respect to said seabed for maintaining said flow line in said stretched position after said flow line has been stretched;

with regard to claim 7,

wherein said locking system includes a unidirectional arresting device (8) operable to allow displacement of said joint end in a direction of elongation of said flow line and to prohibit displacement of said joint end in an opposite direction; and

with regard to claim 15,

further comprising a subsea riser (3a) having a free end, said subsea riser is extended in a catenary.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 8 through 14 are allowed.

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6. As allowable subject matter has been indicated, applicant's reply must either comply with all formal requirements or specifically traverse each requirement not complied with. See 37 CFR 1.111(b) and MPEP § 707.07(a).

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments, see Remarks/Arguments, filed 27 January 2011, with respect to the rejection(s) of claim(s) 1 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Maloberti et al. '137 have been fully considered and are persuasive. Therefore, the rejection has been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of a revision in the application of Maloberti et al. '137.

8. Applicant's arguments filed 27 January 2011 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

With regard to claim 2, Applicant argues Maloberti et al. '137 fail to teach or suggest the claim limitation "permitting displacement of the joint end in a direction of elongation of said flowline, and prohibiting displacement of the joint end in an opposite direction." The examiner contends the step is performed concurrently with the step of fixing. Specifically, as the joint end is fixed with respect to the seabed, the joint end is moved away from the wellhead in one direction of elongation and displacement in a direction opposite elongation (i.e., towards the wellhead) is prohibited.

With regard to claim 3, Applicant argues Maloberti et al. '137 fail to teach or suggest the step of guiding said joint end in translation during elongation of the flowline. The examiner

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contends the step is inherent to the steps of inducing elongation and fixing. Specifically, the joint end is connected to the deadman (5) which is guided to a desired position (col. 4, line 62 through col. 5, line 1).

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Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to TARA MAYO-PINNOCK whose telephone number is (571) 272-6992. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will can be reached on 571-272-6998. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/TARA MAYO-PINNOCK/
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3671

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21 February 2011